

Transcript ~ American Radicalism

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Introduction: The Anatomy of a Radical

I propose in this lecture to offer a few observations on what is very crucial to all revolutions and which we find in the American Revolution at the very start, and which we find as an undercurrent throughout the very complicated story of American thought, especially to the standpoint of what may be called radical reform, re-creation, renovation of American society. And I shall also say a few words about what is the connection between this long and complex story of American radicalism and a much larger story, far more important and universal concern in all societies, in all nations, in all epochs with a City of Man, with a consummation to the evolution, and the very sad political story of the last 200 years, towards some feasible goal that might possibly be attainable within the lifetimes of those alive today, at least many of them, and might even possibly become a reality by the year 2005. This is what I propose to do, and initially one might simply say we are considering two questions: What does it mean to be a radical, what does it mean to be an American radical? And secondly, what does it mean to build 'The City of Man'? These are very important questions, and I hope you will continue to raise them many times in your life.

A radical is a man who gets to the core, the very root, the very root of things. Men cannot agree about what is at the very core of the universe, they cannot agree still less about what is at the root of human nature, they cannot agree about what is the fundamental change needed either in human nature or in society, in institutions, or in individuals, and as long as men cannot agree, there must be varieties of views about what is it to get to the very root of things, and what is it to change the things from the very fundamental foundations which are needed for any enduring and effective re-formation or re-building. In the old myth of the Jews, it is believed that the Temple of Solomon is built by invisible hands, it is ceaselessly built by invisible master builders. Well, this is very similar to what Buddha said much earlier, that the world is constantly on fire, it is constantly being burnt, and it is constantly being rebuilt. So the question then is if the world itself is being continually changed, ceaselessly transformed, and at the same time it contains within it the eternal possibility of some kind of hope or of redemption for men, then

the question is where men disagree in regard to what is it to get to the root of change, how can these men agree at least on essentials? Is there some essential view of man, if we agree that man is at the very root of all social, political and historical change, is there some quintessential view that bears upon the dignity, if not the divinity, the life and certainly the travails of the individual human being, but when seen as a member of the whole family of mankind? A very important question, a very difficult question, some would say that it is almost unanswerable.

In a Platonic sense, such a question is unanswerable in the sense that every answer must lead to further questions. There are premises and presuppositions that are involved, and these are extremely difficult to maintain in one's mind, extremely difficult to understand, and that I would say is true. The best students I have had at Oxford, in America, right here and now in UCSB are those who know that they do not know, they know that it is extremely difficult to handle presuppositions. That is the infallible hallmark of a real thinking being, that it's not easy, but though it is difficult, it is important to make the attempt. And that is another hallmark of a real thinking mind, that he is not afraid of what is difficult, though he knows that what is difficult cannot be snatched suddenly and quickly, except at the level of some oversimplifying formula or slogan or surrendering to some form of methodological dogmatism. This then is the problem. It's a problem that you have encountered in many forms at many times, not only in your studies and in your life but also in this course which has a human dimension to it, because this course is concerned with politics, but not politics seen merely in terms of the manipulation of men, politics understood as the encounter between human minds, human hearts, living human beings in a constant dialectical interaction, seeking ends, disagreeing about the implications of those ends, also, constantly in search of means and often tempted to force the adoption of certain means for the sake of the goal. So here then we find that there is a problem which is more fundamental that we must focus on in relation to what has been said so far if we are even to understand what is involved in getting to the root in American radicalism, let alone in building 'The City of Man'.

The Dialectic of Ends and Means

That problem, then, may first of all be put in this form. If you listened carefully to the lectures on Marx, Lenin, Sorel and Mao, you might have noticed there is one problem which arises in all literature of revolutions, just as much as it arises in all establishment politics. It is the problem

of the relation, the dialectical relation between ends and means. There is always a kind of dialectic that goes on between the purposes of men and in terms of their resources the methods that they employ for the fulfillment of their purposes. To put this at its very simplest, a tree cannot be very different from what you would anticipate in terms of any knowledge you have of other trees from similar seeds, a seed can only produce one kind of tree and no other in terms of its species of trees. At the same time, anyone who has been engaged in gardening knows that there is such an immense variety in relation to any particular tree; if you are concerned with tree planting there are so many factors relevant to the kind of tree that you will get from the seed that you plant. Now this is the most forgotten truth in human affairs, the most obscured insight in politics. In politics there is a strong temptation for leaders of men with ideologies that may originally be rooted in real theories, in *Theoria* or visions, to try to coerce other men on behalf of the goal.

If you want to understand the problem the best source for understanding that problem is Dostoevsky's magnificent essay on 'The Grand Inquisitor', one of the greatest passages ever penned by any great writer, it is very moving, you find it in *The Brothers Karamazov*, it is also available these days in the form of a paperback. It's a very remarkable document because there Jesus reappears, reappears on earth and confronts the Inquisition. The Inquisition represents that standpoint which says that we must, we must do this and that, make these compromises for the sake of giving people happiness, for the sake of some end in terms of which they would become quiet and docile, and what you represent is a threat to order, a threat to stability. The greatest subversive of his time, and one of the greatest of all time was Jesus, he was like Socrates subversive in a very deepest sense, subversive of the prejudices, the established opinions, the inertia and selfishness of the human mind. There is no greater subversion. There is no greater revolution than the revolution inaugurated by the Buddha, or by Jesus, or by Socrates, by men of that caliber and quality, and there have been many such men who belong to that rare race of human beings who challenge those crystallizations of thought that arise out of a failure to appreciate the complexities involved in human growth, which justify every kind of coercion, every kind of fraud and force on behalf of human beings. So that is a very great document to read, and unless you reflect somewhat on this whole problem of ends and means you will never really come to see what goes wrong in politics.

How is it that whatever the theory, whatever the ideology, the problem in practice is the same? Somehow people come to the view that the end justifies the means, if you can only spell out an end that is sufficiently appealing, it is important to find that which is most likely to guarantee results. Most people want results, they want results quickly, and therefore, the great mass of men put an immense pressure in the name of immediate, concrete, early, earthly results, results that they can parade, results that they can show. In demanding proof, demonstration here and now they put the kind of demand on the very greatest leaders of men, which is a temptation for these leaders, and most leaders fall prey to this temptation, because if they did not they are liable to lose their following, or they are liable to require from their following such an immense, pure love of the Good, such a profound, impersonal conviction of the self-validating nature of the quest, in a long march, but also such an overwhelming compassion for other men which makes for a refusal to manipulate any one of them at any time. This is rare. Sorel understood this, though he had no real answer to this problem, because no answer to this problem can merely be a formulated answer, it only becomes an answer when it is an embodied answer, when men emerge who embody an attitude of mind which represents a kind of pure detachment in relation to alternatives together with a profound love, an overwhelming love for human beings, a pure faith in the pristine goal, together with the ability to accept a variety of approximations at any given time.

This is the embodiment of the dialectic, this is very rare, this is very difficult, even to understand what is theoretically involved in this is not easy, and while we cannot go any more into this complex problem of ends and means I mentioned at the very first, because that will prepare you to understand what is the story of American radicalism, it is a very complex and vast story, it is a story that is rooted in a revolution.

The Genesis and Shrinking of the American Dream

And what is unique about the American Revolution of the late 18th century is that it is the first revolution in recorded history which is founded so much in *Theoria* that it actually is a commitment to propositions, to theoretical propositions embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now you see the irony. No revolution started off with a more firm and uncompromising adherence to principles, principles which were hoped are eternal and universal, applicable to all men in all climes at all times, and there was a nobility in that

commitment. The Founding Fathers were pledged, made in one land, to principles that are universally applicable. That is the strength of the American Dream, that is the strength of the American Revolution.

Clearly then if there lies the strength of the Revolution and the Dream what happens subsequently, what happens subsequently is a question that will be answered in a variety of ways but in the end it is one answer, it is a narrowing, a narrowing of the original vision, a progressive shrinking of the original dream in the desire for concrete embodiment. The abstract propositions of the Declaration of Independence, which again in 1976 will be the endless subject of celebration, of discussion, of analysis and over-analysis, and also of ritual forms of commitment, they have to be abstract if they are to apply to human beings in general, if they are not merely to be seen as the unique property of any one people, anyone society. At the same time human beings on earth in time they want to make unique claims, they need to belong to a community. They must associate with and make allegiance to other men on behalf of claims in terms of space and time, that our society began 200 years ago, that here is this vast land of abundance and opportunity into which came sons of the soil, men of every kind, but many from the poorest classes of Europe, and in time from all over the world, here is this great assemblage, this mixing of peoples, peoples from the poorer classes of the world, the world's proletariat, a sample of the world's proletariat brought together in terms of a commitment to principles embodied as propositions.

The beginning is far more glorious and more golden than American historians are able to show in their retelling of it. There is something hidden about the beginning. Tom Paine, the theophilanthropist, he was a very unusual man. This man who came from England, who held no power, who sought no glory, who wrote a pamphlet embodying what a lot of people knew but were afraid to tell, and thereby made the revolution possible and made it look like common sense. He was a man who claimed, but not in any offensive sense, but he knew, and he said so what he knew, he said that he was visited, visited he said in his study by all kinds of influences that entered into his mind and affected his pen. And he was a great friend of Jefferson, and he inspired Jefferson to write the Declaration of Independence. It was a very great and a very elusive beginning. It's the same Tom Paine who early in the century could be dismissed by a Theodore Roosevelt as a dirty little atheist, that's how unworthy the successors to the Founders became in relation to the Forefathers. Fortunately now we have a very remarkable biography,

To Spit Against the Wind, of Tom Paine, which is for the first time available to large numbers of people and attempts to do some restitution to the true glory of that great man. But no one who can read, who knows enough how to read, and who reads the writings of Tom Paine, will fail to recognize the imprint of that vision in that very, very great man.

He called himself a theophilanthropist, a lover of mankind. It was Tom Paine who said that the religion of the future involves a stripping away of all accretions upon that which was in the beginning. That every man is a temple of God, and it is only within that temple, within the sanctuary of his own self, that he will come closer to the Divine, that same Divine which is also in Nature, but which cannot be limited and anthropomorphized, which represents a universal exemplification of a single source of the light of reason which is accessible to the light of reason of the individual human minds. And Tom Paine also gave the archetypal keynote of American radicals in a statement that "society arises because of human wants, but government emerges because of human wickedness". It is because men have wants that they need each other, that they must get into a society, no man can fulfill his wants except in the company of other men, and because of the collective wants of human beings, there is a certain validity and value to human society, but unfortunately because men are also weak and out of their weaknesses they want to hand over, hand over the job of finding fulfillment to some authority, they need authority to the extent to which they are weak, and that authority when it is embodied through imperfect men, whatever the laws, whatever the system in a government, will gradually license every form of wickedness.

So, Tom Paine looks like an anarchist. He was a no-government man, because for him the ideal society was stateless, but at the same time he also knew that to get towards the ideal right here and now you must first of all de-glamourize government.

You do need a government at any given time until men are ready for a stateless society. Now there is the seed of American radicalism, the de-glamourization of government, the recognition that men in governments have limitations, that governments are ceaselessly liable to go wrong, which means then that there must be a permanent revolution in society. If America is rooted in a particular revolution and that is a revolution of ideas, a revolution in spirit, then the whole of America must participate in a permanent revolution of the mind and of the spirit. And here let us take the phrase of Jefferson. Jefferson said that revolution is like medicine, there must be a

permanent cleansing, a permanent cure of the ailments of the body politic, and it can only take place in the minds of men, it is a kind of therapy.

And Jefferson went further and he said that in every generation there must be that kind of revolution in our own political system which prevents the ossification of the forms of government in terms of the principles and the laws of the Constitution, and therefore you can see that this Jeffersonian view of actually rearranging even institutions, if necessary rewrite clauses in the Constitution, this was too revolutionary.

And apparently before he died Jefferson knew, Jefferson knew that even before he had finished that the story, which was the story of all societies, was just about starting in America. And apparently also when someone told him about the problem of slavery he said, how I wish I could give the whole of another life to that but I'm afraid even in relation to what I've already done I recognize that it's not easy.

That great man passed away on the 4th of July, early in the 19th century, on the same day as Adams. And President Everett of Harvard in one of the finest orations ever given, paying tribute both to Jefferson and to a much weaker man who was a believer in original sin, Adams, but also a very noble man and a great lover of the Dream that was the American Dream, in that speech President Everett said that these two men did something which will not be understood until long in the future, and it is only for the rest of the world to pay tribute to what they have done. He saw the universality of the beginning, and he also recognized that if something real happens you do not have to boast about it, the whole world will come to pay proper acknowledgement and that the world has done.

The world has been much readier from the beginning, even in revolutionary leaders like Ho Chi Minh, against whom this country is fighting in Vietnam, and against his men. But all the great revolutionary leaders of the world have been very willing to make an acknowledgement to the nobility of the beginning of the American Revolution. So here then you get this tremendous irony that even though something important and universal happened within that very society which inherited the Dream, the limitations of men became in time more and more a kind of blinding barrier, a blinding barrier between Americans and the rest of humanity, so that in the last few years the most popular saying among diplomats, among political thinkers in Europe is there is only one way by which the world will unite and produce 'The City of Man',

by joining on the basis of anti-Americanism. What a tragedy... What a tragedy that what in the beginning was meant to inspire all men led in less than 200 years to a position, whereas Dr. Toynbee said there has been more bloodshed spilt in the name of America since the war than in the name of any other nation including Russia, and more bloodshed spilt than in the Second World War. What a tremendous tragedy.

Many of you will take these cheap trips abroad, and you will receive no doubt a certain amount of goodwill, but if you are sensitive you will discover how you will be ashamed in so many contexts to be an American. Is it this for which the Founding Fathers died? So no wonder then we can only feel deeply the poignancy of the whole story, and that poignancy continues as we trace the story, which of course we cannot do in detail on this occasion, but you will find as you go through subsequent thinkers that there is a tremendous kind of tension between two standpoints. There are those who put the emphasis upon the individual. No one has done this more nobly than Emerson. And there are those on the other side who put the emphasis upon the community. No one did this more nobly in the beginning than men like Tom Paine. But the tension has continued.

Now I think it's very important, if you ever want to understand the story, to understand both sides of it, and to try to see the truth in both standpoints, and then to see dialectically if there is a way in which the truths on both sides can be brought together. That is something you will have to do because not any of these radicals was truly a user of the dialectic, some of them intuitively were dialecticians. Certainly, that was true through love in Whitman, who in his 'Song of the Open Road' saw how all the little loves add up into a vast and great love, and who coined that memorable phrase 'Inheritors of Mankind'. For Whitman, Americans were the 'Inheritors of Mankind', Compassionaters, Lovers, Brothers to all men and nations. He was able to feel it in his pulse, he was able to state it again and again nobly.

But nonetheless, the lesser sons of America were not able to feel what these men felt, to think the thoughts they did, and thereby you'll find once again, the story of America is like the story of all nations and of all mankind of the weak inheriting the vision of the strong and becoming a burden, a burden upon the original dream. It's a very tragic story but it's a universal story, and if we see that it's a universal story, we will then recognize that the only way to come out of the pseudo-universalism of America is through authentic universalism. The only cure to false

universalism is true universality, and true universality in the mind means understanding the implications of propositions that are abstract and general. True universalism of the heart, which ought to be easier for human beings, is to be able to put oneself in the place of other men elsewhere who are disinherited, who are the pioneers of revolutions or are the victims of revolutions, other men who are seeking in all parts of the world for an extension, all over the globe, of what was at the beginning part of the American Dream, which America borrowed from France, as well as from the Iroquois Indians in its confederation, and which in borrowing from France, France in turn borrowed from China.

There is an endless borrowing that goes on in history. This is why it is not important who starts something, it is more important who stays with it, who remains true to what is begun, and who in times of trial can be counted upon. This then is the problem of politics, it's a problem of revolutions, it's a problem of the American Dream confronted today against the American system, it is also a problem of American radicalism. There are certain characteristics of the mind which become peculiarly against even grasping the problem, which you found earlier in the history of Europe, which you found in other forms earlier in the history of the world, but which are peculiarly to be found in America.

Self-Reliance and the Illusions of Technique

One of them is the search for a once and for all solution. There is something simplistic about the mind of the self-educated, the autodidact, the half-educated, the poorly educated, who wants, right here and now, a once and for all solution. But furthermore, where such a person has a lot of energy and where he has a demonic will, a will to dominate, he wants a solution which he can impose upon other men. And no wonder now more people are talking about the connection between the United States of America today and the Atlantis which Plato refers to, that Atlantis, which was destroyed by the will to dominate, and the oversimplification and dogmatism of its greatest men. So, the search for once and for all solutions is to be distrusted.

Does that mean that once you go into the opposite extreme and look for no solutions and pose as an existentialist or a nihilist? Is the nihilism of the young today in high schools the only answer of which young Americans are capable of as an alternative to once and for all solutions? Can they not think that there is another way, that there could be small solutions in terms of a

large vision? Of course they can. But nonetheless, too many people tend to react and to merely live by reacting.

And together with this tendency, there is another tendency which is more understandable in a technological society, but which is also much more mind-crippling. It is a constant search for techniques in a society, where, younger than in any society on earth, a boy can sit behind the wheel of a car, and for the sake of impressing his girl, he can think that by pushing a button, he's speeding along and having an illusion of omnipotence. Understandable... Human... Human... But if he stays with it, and if he is then let us say is very clever, went to Caltech, and there, and there he is suddenly shown equations, because he was denied as a boy, toys that he really liked, toys that he didn't want and destroy, and then he starts to be mesmerized by these equations. He becomes what Shaw calls 'The New Barbarian', 'The New Barbarian' using equations for the sake of gaining confidence but becoming mesmerized like a savage. This is very important to consider, and this is also very tragic, because anyone who lives in the mountains sees constantly people wounded, chased by the police, die very young, simply because a boy and a girl cannot go somewhere, just to be together. And that involves so much drama and so much tragedy. There is a side to it, which is very painful, but we have to understand it. What is it about the 'technique-sizing' of the solution which hinders understanding? Why instead of looking at ideas in terms of their many implications, and using for a while the opportunity to understand through ideas the world, and then carefully formulating one's own plan for the human good, why does one want an instant technique? He's not going to get to The Golden Age by switching on a light, by driving an automatic, automated car, which is going to take you on a kind of freeway at a high speed, quickly to The Golden Age.

Thirdly, most important, political messianism, political messianism where, for the sake of security, the Kingdom of God, the City of God on earth, right here and now one is willing to sacrifice other men. And that is where 'The Grand Inquisitor' is relevant. This is an old story; this is not unique to America.

If you look at the story of Europe in the 19th century and in the 20th century it is a story of political messianism, where someone emerges with an ideology, and there is a lot that is valid in that ideology, but in time through parties, through organizations, through states, through the possession of weapons, there is a most terrible Holocaust that takes place in the name of those

ideas. That story is more European, it's not American. That story goes back to something very old, something which is rooted in the idea that the Kingdom of God must be snatched here and now, that any one generation has a right to claim that it is the generation that is going to arrive at the portals of paradise here and now on earth. That is a much subtler mistake, that is a more universal mistake, which could only be corrected by a calmer reflection upon nature as a whole, the cycles of all history, and trying to insert the dream of human progress within a vaster view that is cyclic, and which accommodates the most basic facts in human life, that men are born, that men grow, that men suffer, that men ache with pain, that men make mistakes and errors, that they grow old and they die. To ignore these primal facts, as if these primal facts are threatening tropes which must be ignored, will only produce a lie, a lie in the soul in the case of the individual, a lie in the system, in the case of the ideology, a lie in the program, in the case of the party, a lie in the state, in the case of the creed.

Which brings one then to that greatest diagnosis of the problem that you will ever find, which is in Emerson's essay on 'Self -Reliance', and I beseech each and every one of you to read it, to thrill with the wisdom of that essay. Read it on the morning of your examination, it will clear your mind, it will give you strength, read it before taking any examination, read it before you write your paper. There is a power to the writing of that noble man who provides a basis for the future culture of America. If ever Americans are going to become truly cultured, not merely have a technological civilization, but a true culture of their own, which is rooted in soul culture, which does more than merely throw around a few gimmicky phrases and participate in a few gestures and symbols, they will have to learn from that great soul called Emerson who teaches how it is done. And Emerson says that creeds are the disease of the mind, prayers are the disease of the will.

As long as you petition and pray to some outside force to give you a magical cure for your results, you have rejected true religion on behalf of false religiosity. Remember that statement of Solzhenitsyn, in *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, "Prayers are like petitions, they never get to the authorities", or they are invariably rejected. Prayers for one's own little old self do not make it. There is an inner meaning to our Lord's Prayer, but no man can come closer to that inner meaning who does not understand that he cannot separate himself from other men. To petition for one's own sake, remember, it's a disease of the will, and creeds are a disease of the mind, a refusal to think, result in the wanting of a packaged formula, whereby one can be saved,

a creed which will have all the answers, a single system which provides answers to every question. That is to dethrone one's dignity as a man, that is to spit on the dialectic, any man who spits on the dialectic, he will be destroyed by that dialectic, any society that spits on the dialectic will be destroyed, because the dialectic in nature is no respecter of persons, is no discriminator between nations and societies. That dialectic says, the part must give way to the whole, the whole will triumph, all small circles must be cancelled in favor of larger circles, the largest circle will prevail.

That then is what America is now beginning for the first time in its long history to recognize, and which is symbolized in the fact that the President of the most powerful nation on earth had to go like a tutory head of a tribe in the old days to pay tribute to a Marxist emperor called Mao Zedong. That is a price for shutting one's eyes to the reality of the world in which we live. The whole world recognizes the immense humiliation of America at the altar of the pride of the Chinese that we witnessed last week, and yet many people say there is something bigger than America's humiliation and China's pride, and that is humanity. For the sake of humanity whatever the gestures and the poses if something better than we have had for a long time can emerge, we can use it.

It's not surprising that the Chinese were so impressed by that lady in red sitting among all of those in beige—Pat Nixon, because apparently according to a Chinese commentator, she had two characteristics which are not associated with today's Americans. One, she said she did not know at every point, but the other, she said she was very much wanting to learn. When people see that, they know they are seeing something real, the minimum marks of a human being in a dehumanized society. If anyone wants to become human, long before he's ready to talk about the superhuman, let him fulfill those two qualifications: Say freely and frankly, despite all the pretense of high school, of competition, IV, the University and everywhere: "I do not know". Let him show minimum respect and say, "I do not know", let him show it to his colleagues first, and then he will find it easier to show it to those who deserve more. But let him also say, with a twinkle in his eyes, "I want to learn. I want to learn", twinkling eyes of that noble woman from UCLA—Pat Nixon, that incredible quality of willingness to acknowledge ignorance and to enthuse about learning. That was profoundly moving, so if she can do it, it can be done, there is hope for America, there is hope. There is hope because what one person can do in America, anyone can do, anything you can do, I can do better.

And catching up with Pat Nixon will be the first step you might take to prepare in yourself in your lifetime to understand the emerging 'City of Man', 'The City of Man' that has already become an invisible place to emerge out of the hidden depths, and which will not become visible until, until several decades have gone. Only the most intuitive, the most compassionate will recognize this process of the gradual unfolding, the gradual descent of 'The City of Man'. This then is a very important question and is at that level that I could not possibly speak, in terms of so much that must remain hidden, must necessarily be invisible for its own good.

Authentic Universalism and the City of Man

Nonetheless, anyone, any man, any American is entitled to ask: "What would be the meaning of a 'City of Man'?" And for that he can simply ask the question in a variety of ways: Is it the same as 'The City of God'? Is it *Civitas Dei*? Is it what in Sanskrit is called the *Devanagari*, the 'City of the Gods'? What is it? What is it behind and beyond language? What is that Heavenly City? Is that City capable of being re-embodied in this class? Yes! If the preconditions were present. Is it capable of being re-embodied in Isla Vista? Yes! If Isla Vista fulfills the preconditions. Is it capable of being re-embodied in the whole of Santa Barbara? Yes. Whittier said that if only the Founding Fathers had not stopped where they did, here could be the Second Founding. Well, that's an enigmatic remark, that is a remark which is mind-blowing, but which should not be pursued at this point, lest any illusions are encouraged. Is it possible for 'The City of Man' to emerge in southern California? Yes. If the preconditions are present. Is it possible for 'The City of Man' to emerge in the United States of America? Yes. What we call the United States of America will not exist in this form when 'The City of Man' exists. What we call the existing arrangement will not continue.

Well, many questions, but most important (and that is most important) could the whole of mankind come together in a global community—A Cosmopolis? And here you might reflect upon the distinction between utopia and cosmopolis which you'll find in this little book. It is a distinction which is well made, it is one that could also be questioned. Utopia originally means 'no place', that which is nowhere. But in practice, men have had dreams of ideal societies, and they have attached it to particular places, they have made concrete embodiments of an abstract vision, and men thereby become deceived by their own creations. Like you have a wonderful

dream of the girl you love or the boy you love, all of it, and the dream is beautiful, but when you try to write a poem about it, when you try to make a picture, if you are deceived by your own creation and you think this is it, then you will settle for an image instead of the reality and beauty of your own dream. This is a perennial temptation, and therefore utopianism becomes a bad word, because men who have creative imagination become prisoners of their own images of the ideal, and having become prisoners of the images of their ideal, they expect other men to enthuse equally with an enthusiasm that is not in the images but is in their hearts, and they expect other men also to accept their own concretized, materialized version of that ideal.

There is a lot of wisdom in the saying of the French poet (a favorite saying of mine as a little boy) Le-Martin: "The ideal is only truth at a distance" — "The ideal is only truth at a distance." There is a lot in that statement, a lot because if you do not stay at a proper distance from the ideal in your contemplation of it, you lose it. You lose it because you become clouded, you do not have a clear vision of the ideal, and out of cloudy perceptions, in place of a clear vision of the ideal, men mislead others in relation to what the ideal is, because that which is real and that which is ideal are dialectically the same. The dialectic ceaselessly enables you to convert one into the opposite. The ideal is the most real. What is the most real thing in your life, have you really thought about it? What is the most real thing in this class, in this course, have you ever reflected upon it? The ideal is truth at a distance, but the ideal is always equal to the real. This then requires the wisdom of the dialectic to understand, and that is relevant, but meanwhile, it is true a lot of men have transformed that which is in 'no place' into a concretized model attached to space and time of 'The City of Man', thereby they became guilty of a false and sometimes a fanatical utopianism.

On the other side, we have men from the earliest times, but especially after the death of Plato and Aristotle, after the end of the city states, before Byzantium emerged, during the time of the breakdown of the Hellenic Empire we found stoics emerged, cynics emerged, skeptics, epicureans, and among all these men there were varieties of envisioning of what was called 'The Cosmopolis', 'The Polis of the Universe', 'The City of the World', that which later became *Civitas Dei*, 'The City of God', but which among these men was *Civitas Humana*, 'The City of Man'. And it is an extraordinary story, that a complicated story, but with all these matters, obviously one cannot go into detail, and in fact, I myself, who have written upon all these subjects over many years, cannot really oversimplify any of these past texts, they are extraordinarily fascinating and

always profound, they are extremely important. And if you therefore want to truly reflect upon 'The City of Man', you must find out what is the new meaning that could be attached to 'The Cosmopolis'? What does it mean to become a true cosmopolitan? Was that not the original meaning of the American?

The man who defines himself but is willing to inherit the whole wealth and wisdom of human history, who is willing to learn from anywhere and everywhere, who is willing as a homeless wanderer to relate to anyone at any time, that was meant to be the new man, the man of the future, the man without ties that become oppressive, but the man who is capable of doing what one of the greatest Americans said in our own time, at the end of the war, "Let us join the human race". And it was the same American who said to me, what is wrong with America is that Americans have stopped listening after the age of three. That's the trouble, because they have stopped listening after the age of three, they cannot even begin to understand what it means to inherit the human race. In other words, he knew that even when great teachers are present upon the soil, that though the very greatest Americans are extremely willing to learn and to listen, there are many who are so full of so many, many barriers that they cannot possibly, cannot possibly relate readily to a vision that becomes feasible for them in their own lives. So therefore, you might say in one sense that this generation of the transition is a condemned generation, it knows enough to see through the past, it does not know enough to see clearly into the future. Well, so it must be, so it must be if there is to be a transition that is painful but necessary. But they might fall into a greater illusion, the illusion that just because hippies emerged, Diggers emerged, therefore suddenly they have access, access to the contemporary revolution. They do not.

The contemporary revolution is a revolution not in institutions or in men, as I have said before, but in the very relations between men and institutions, in the very relations between men and other men. Unless there is a progressive righting of the primary relations of human beings, unless beginnings are made in that direction, there will be no, no participation by those who cannot do that in 'The City of Man' of the future. They may go through many changes, and these changes will take place through establishment bodies, on a world plane, which already know that one could reallocate the resources of the world for the sake of all.

At the privilege of belonging to such a body called the Club of Rome, seventy men from the world who have all of the information gathered through computers about all of the resources of the world, and one knows how astonishingly easy it is to redirect these resources in a manner where to quote a phrase of Buckminster Fuller: "There could be a 100% solution for every living human being". No human being need be sacrificed. The earth is more bountiful than the doomsdayers tell you, because the doomsdayers want to consolidate the existing interests of small classes of men, and those interests cannot be protected, and therefore the only answer they have is very interesting.

In the end, we have only one answer on the negative side and one answer on the positive. The answer on the negative is wipe out human beings; control, restrict population. It's a very grim answer, isn't it? But is there an alternative—an alternative that is better than that answer—where one could find a place for every man under the sun on earth? There is, but to be able to understand it, to be worthy of that vision needs a lot of time for reflection, for deliberation, for meditation. No man would even be worthy of embodying in his mind that supreme vision of 'The City of Man', the world of the future, without preliminary steps of preparation.

On the other hand, any and every man could right here and now participate in that universal vision through his heart. So, there is a deep sense in which love is the way, but real love, that real love which isn't born immediately, which can only come out of, you might say false anticipations, and that is why that ladder is so magnificent. From all your early gropings at pseudo-eros, but somewhere in your heart there is the glory of the birth potentially present of that true love which is like light. Which is like light, that when it is shared, can add without subtraction, can be multiplied without limit, can provide a model of ontological plenty, to get beyond the zero-sum games of the logic of scarcity and competition. That is the logic of the psychology, the ethics and morality, the mysticism and the philosophy of plenty, of true plenty.

Therefore, one might say, to be able to really understand what is involved in answering those two questions in which we started (What is involved in getting to the root of reforming America? What is involved in building 'The City of Man'?) might as well start to reflect and meditate dialectically upon scarcity and plenty. What is scarce and what is plentiful? Is there a way by which what is scarce can be more justly and wisely allocated? This is Tolstoy's question: How much land should a man have? How much should one human being have for the sake of ego

satisfaction? How much can he settle for, for the sake of something larger? Which is more important to him?

And here of course it is not for me to underestimate the incredible ingenuity of the young American who has shown more than the young of any nation, the willingness to make a little go far, but on the other hand, he's also unable, unable to actualize his dream of psychological plenty. So therefore, we might say this is a painful time of transition. To get to a true cosmopolis is even more utopian than to merely make up a particular utopia. So, this is why there is a problem, whichever side, whichever front you perceive, you will in the end face the same problem, the problem of the dialectic. And therefore, I wish to say finally, if you want your answer, you have it in your pocket, you have it all the time. Next time you are about to spend a dollar bill, ask yourself, what is involved in bringing that capstone with the eye in it closer to the pyramid in yourself? What is involved in releasing within yourself the synthesizing vision that is born of the marriage of truth and of love and spells out this compassion.